

## Born Again

*“who, according to His great mercy, has caused us to be born again to a living hope”*

**1 Peter 1:3**

**Born again**—The Greek word here is *anagennesas*. This word comes from *ana* (again) and *gennaō* (to beget). This is a word that Peter made up. It is not found anywhere else in the New Testament. But this does not mean that it is an idea unique to Peter. Peter simply captures in a new word what Jesus taught about being born “from above” in **John 3**. There are two important ideas in this word. The first is that the verb is *passive*. It is not something that I do for myself. It is something done to me by God. The second important idea is that this is a word of *participation*, not of an experience, a state of being or a kind of power. It describes the beginning of a new life, not a mystical experience. To be “born again” means that I am regenerate into a new life that continues forever. I am participating in new living. This new life actually increases the tension between our old way of living and this new way of living. I feel this tension as my new way of living works itself out in the process of becoming like God’s Son.

“Born again” is shorthand way of describing the moment when you yielded control of your life to God and recognized that Christ removed the barrier that stood between you and God. In fact, Peter tells us that God was instrumental in calling us to Him, causing us to confront our need for reconciliation. But it is not the end of a process. It is the beginning of being animated by God.

I can point to the day this happened to me. I was sitting in the middle of a soccer field on the island of Nuka’alofa in the South Pacific. I knew my life needed something that I could not find. I knew God had His hand on me, pressing me to open my eyes to Him. And I knew that Christ took the punishment I deserved. That moment started a long journey, full of wandering, wrestling, wishing and willing. That moment made me a participant in God’s work in process. It was not the conclusion. It was the prologue. It was the turning point in a road that has seen lots of poor decisions, deliberate disobedience and downright obstinacy. But God never let go. He is still “re-making” me, every day, every minute, on my pathway toward the goal He has in mind. Now I can look back on that moment and say, “Thank you, Lord, for my second birth. Thank you for allowing me to grow up all over again. Twice blessed.”

What was your second birthday like? Are you living “twice blessed?”